



Embassy of the United States of America

Guatemala City

August 29, 2007

The Ambassador

The Honorable
Barney Frank
U.S. House of Representatives
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2104

Dear Representative Frank:

I am writing in response to your letter of August 27, 2007 concerning your constituents, and their concerns about the welfare of the children at Casa Quivira in Guatemala. U.S. diplomats in Washington and at our Embassy in Guatemala have been following developments at Casa Quivira closely.

We have on several occasions communicated to Guatemalan officials our view that the well-being of the children should be the paramount concern while the legal status of Casa Quivira, as well as each child's relinquishment/adoption process, is being resolved by Guatemalan authorities. We believe that the Government of Guatemala, which carries the sole responsibility for monitoring, licensing, and regulating child care facilities in that country, shares our view. Without exception, representatives of the Guatemalan government have assured us of their determination to ensure the children's safety and well-being. As of August 24, 2007, each of the children had been moved to either a separate, private adoption care facility or to a medical clinic.

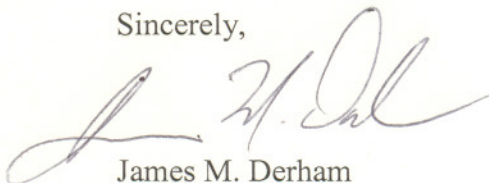
The Embassy maintains regular contact with Guatemalan authorities concerning the children who were living at Casa Quivira. Guatemalan officials have expressed a willingness to share information with the State Department about the health and welfare of the children formerly resident at the facility. With this information, staff in the Department's Office of Children's Issues have reached out to prospective adoptive parents who have been matched with children from Casa Quivira, as we have been able to identify those parents.

Guatemala is a signatory to the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. The Department of State has been engaged at many levels over the past year with the Government of Guatemala and other partners in the Hague Adoption Convention in efforts to develop a transparent intercountry adoption system in Guatemala which will safeguard the rights of all parties to an intercountry adoption: the birth parents, the

prospective adoptive parents and, most importantly, the children. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has approved a \$110,000 grant to the Oregon-based Holt International Children's Services for a project to begin to build a child welfare infrastructure in Guatemala to meet the international standard of best practices established by the 70 member countries of the Hague Intercountry Adoption Convention. We are committed to continued close cooperation with the Guatemala Government as they reform their adoption procedures.

We encourage families involved in Guatemalan adoptions to communicate directly with the Office of Children's Issues office at AdoptionUSCA@state.gov and with their Guatemalan lawyers for updates on developments in Guatemala.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. M. Derham", written over the printed name.

James M. Derham